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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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PATENT FILING TRANSMITTAL

Transmitted herewith for filing is the Patent Application of: Reinaldo A. Bergamashi and Subhrajit Bhattacharya

For: METHODS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR AUTOMATICALLY INTERCONNECTING  
CORES IN SYSTEMS-ON-CHIPS

TYPE OF FILING

This new patent application is for a(n):

- ☒ Utility  
☐ Design  
☐ Plant  
☐ Divisional  
☐ Continuation  
☐ Continuation-in-part

Benefit of a prior filed application

- ☐ This application claims the benefit of an earlier filed U.S. Patent Application under 35 USC 120.  
☐ Please accord Applicant the benefit of the priority date of \_\_\_\_\_ to this case pursuant to 35 USC 119. Applicant's claim for priority is based on application \_\_\_\_\_ filed in \_\_\_\_\_ on that date.

Filing under 37 CFR 1.53 (Utility) or 37 CFR 1.153 (Design)

- ☒ This is an application filed pursuant to 37 CFR 1.53 or 37 CFR 1.153, permitting receipt of a filing date upon filing of a specification, at least one claim and necessary drawings.  
☒ In the event any parts of this application are incomplete, please treat this as a filing under 37 CFR 1.53 or 37 CFR 1.153.

ENCLOSURES

- ☒ 29 - pages of written description;  
☒ 5 - pages of claims;  
☒ 1 - pages of abstract;  
☐ \_\_\_\_\_ - sheets of formal drawings;  
☒ 4 - sheets of informal drawings;  
☒ Declaration and Power of Attorney or listing of inventors;  
and  
☒ Two postcards for return to us as proof of receipt of the above documents.

plus

- ☐ An Assignment of the invention to IBM Corporation and an Assignment cover sheet;  
☐ Verified Statement Claiming Small Entity Status (37 CFR 1.9(f) and 1.27(b))

- ☐ Form PTO-1449 (IDS) and two copies of the references listed thereon;
- ☐ A certified copy of \_\_\_\_\_ (country) patent application number (priority document).
- ☐ A preliminary amendment;
- ☐ Declaration of Biological Deposit;
- ☐ Submission of sequence listing, computer readable copy and/or amendment relating thereto for biotechnology invention containing nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence;
- ☐ An associate power of attorney;
- ☐ Other.

#### DECLARATION OR OATH

The enclosed Declaration or Oath has been executed by:

- ☐ Inventor(s);
- ☐ Legal representative of the inventors (37 CFR 1.42 or 1.43);
- ☐ Joint inventor or person showing proprietary interest on behalf of an inventor who refused to sign or who cannot be reached and this is a petition required by 37 CFR 1.47 and the statement required by 37 CFR 1.47 is attached;
- ☒ Has not been executed and is enclosed for the purposes of identifying the inventors.

#### INVENTORSHIP STATEMENT

The inventorship for all the claims in this application is:

- ☐ the same;
- ☐ not the same and, as an explanation, a statement is/ will be submitted.

#### LANGUAGE

The application submitted herewith is:

- ☒ in English;
- ☐ in not in English and in terms of 37 CFR 1.52(d) a verified translation is
  - ☐ attached
  - ☐ not attached.

#### FEE CALCULATION

The filing fee has been calculated as shown below:

			SMALL ENTITY OR	OTHER THAN A SMALL ENTITY
BASIC FEE Design Patent	\$155	\$	\$310	\$
BASIC FEE Utility Patent	\$345	\$	\$690	\$690
EXTRA FEES	RATE	FEE	RATE	FEE
TOTAL CLAIMS 18 MINUS 20= 0	x 9=	\$0	x18=	\$0
INDEP.CLAIMS 3 MINUS 3 = 0	x 39=	\$0	x78=	\$0
<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE DEP.CLAIM	+135=	\$	+270=	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> ASSIGNMENT	+ 40=	\$	+40=	\$0
<input type="checkbox"/> RULE 53 SURCHARGE	+ 65=	\$	+130=	\$
TOTAL		\$		<u>\$690</u>

Respectfully submitted,

Stanley D. Perone

Dated: April 3, 2000

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PATENT

Docket No. YOR-2000-0054

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicant(s) : Reinaldo A. BERGAMASHI et al      Group Art: not yet assigned  
Serial No. : not yet assigned      Examiner: not yet assigned  
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INTERCONNECTING CORES IN SYSTEMS-ON-CHIPS



**EXPRESS MAIL CERTIFICATE**

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Date of Deposit 3 April 2000

I hereby certify that the following attached paper(s) or fee:

Patent Application  
Written Description  
Claims 1-18  
Abstract  
Drawings (Figs. 1-5)  
Declaration and Power of Attorney (unexecuted)  
Patent Filing Transmittal  
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Stanley D. Ference III

(Typed or printed name of  
person mailing paper)

(Signature of person mailing  
paper(s) or fee)

Mailing Address:

FERENCE & ASSOCIATES  
129 Oakhurst Road  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15215  
(412) 781-7386  
(412) 781-8390-Facsimile

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**METHODS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR AUTOMATICALLY**  
**INTERCONNECTING CORES IN SYSTEMS-ON-CHIP**

**Field of the Invention**

The present invention generally relates to methods and arrangements for  
5 interconnecting cores in systems-on-chip (SoCs).

**Background of the Invention**

The reuse of pre-designed and pre-verified Intellectual Property (IP) blocks or  
cores has been identified heretofore as something that can enable very large systems-on-  
chip designs. However, the lack of appropriate tools and the increasing complexity of  
10 such cores makes them inherently difficult and error-prone to use. One of the main  
problems in using cores is the generation of all interconnections among them.

Of late, there have been profound, fundamental changes in the way very large scale  
integration (VLSI) systems are designed. The use of IP blocks or cores, in many different  
forms (hard, soft, firm) for SoC design is now being recognized as vital, if not an absolute  
15 necessity. Since these cores are pre-designed and pre-verified, a designer can concentrate  
on the complete system without having to worry about the correctness or performance of  
the individual components.

However, the lack of appropriate tools for using and integrating these cores has hindered meaningful progress. In fact, SoCs have grown considerably in size in recent years. It is currently commonplace to find SoC designs with well over thirty cores, with the percentage of core content varying from 50% to almost 95%. In this connection,  
5 reference is made to A. Rincon, W. Lee and M. Slatery, "The Changing Landscape of System-on-a-Chip Design" (IBM MicroNews, 3rd Quarter 1999, Vol.5, No.3, IBM Microelectronics) and A. Rincon, C. Cherichetti, J. Monzel, D. Stauffer and M. Trick, "Core Design and System-on-a-Chip Integration" (IEEE Design & Test of Computers, October/December 1997).

10 In order to understand the complexity of designing such systems, it is instructive to consider the complexity of the cores being used. Current cores can be extremely complex, with tens of thousands of gates and hundreds of pins. Designing using such cores has become a major problem because it requires designers to understand the functionality, interfaces and electrical characteristics of complex cores such as microprocessors, moving  
15 picture experts group (MPEG) decoders, direct memory access (DMA) controllers, etc. Moreover, the situation is further complicated by the fact that cores may be designed by different IP providers with different interface protocols, but need to be made interoperable with other cores.



has to understand the characteristics of the pins in all cores and determine which pins can be connected together. Pins in different cores may be connected together if they exhibit compatible functional and electrical characteristics. The CIE preferably employs methods and algorithms for describing these characteristics as well as analyzing and comparing  
5 them.

The present invention broadly contemplates, in accordance with at least one presently preferred embodiment, a first aspect involving core and pin properties and a second aspect involving an interconnection engine, both of which are described in detail herein.

10 In one aspect, the present invention provides a method of interconnecting cores in systems-on-chip, the method comprising the steps of: selecting at least two cores to be interconnected, each core having at least one associated pin; automatically assessing the compatibility of at least one pin of at least one core with respect to at least one pin of at least one other core; and automatically interconnecting the cores via establishing at least  
15 one connection between at least one pair of compatible pins.

In another aspect, the present invention provides a system for interconnecting cores in systems-on-chip, the system comprising: a selector which selects at least two cores to be interconnected, each core having at least one associated pin; an assessing



arrangement which automatically assesses the compatibility of at least one pin of at least one core with respect to at least one pin of at least one other core; and a connecting arrangement which automatically interconnects the cores via establishing at least one connection between at least one pair of compatible pins.

5           Furthermore, in another aspect, the present invention provides a program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for interconnecting cores in systems-on-chip, the method comprising: selecting at least two cores to be interconnected, each core having at least one associated pin; automatically assessing the compatibility of at least one pin of at  
10   least one core with respect to at least one pin of at least one other core; and automatically interconnecting the cores via establishing at least one connection between at least one pair of compatible pins.

For a better understanding of the present invention, together with other and further features and advantages thereof, reference is made to the following description, taken in  
15   conjunction with the accompanying drawings, and the scope of the invention will be pointed out in the appended claims.

### **Brief Description of the Drawings**

Fig. 1 depicts a classification tree for cores and pins;

Fig. 2 depicts a pin property group;

Fig. 3 depicts a fragment of a PSF description for a core;

5 Fig. 4 is a flow diagram of steps performed during interconnection generation; and

Fig. 5 is a schematic block diagram of an interconnecting system as broadly contemplated.

### **Description of the Preferred Embodiments**

One aspect of the present invention, in accordance with at least one presently  
10 preferred embodiment, involves core and pin properties.

In order to automatically generate interconnections among cores, it is preferable to encode the structural and functional characteristics of a component and its pins, in a manner that can be algorithmically processed by a computer program. In conventional design methodologies, the designer has to spend a large amount of time reading and  
15 understanding specification manuals just to find out how pins in different components need to be connected.

In a presently contemplated CIE, this information is encoded into properties attached to all components and their pins. The CIE preferably contains algorithms which can efficiently compare these properties and decide whether two pins should be connected (see further below).

5 Properties associated with a pin define the functionality and taxonomy of that pin. By assigning unique properties to all pins in all cores, it is possible to compare those properties and determine if the pins are compatible. In practice, it may not be possible nor desirable to assign unique properties to all pins, but still the CIE should find or help the designer find the right interconnection for a given pin. In P. Schindler, K. Weidenbacher  
10 and T. Zimmermann, "IP Repository, A Web based IP Reuse Infrastructure" (Proceedings of IEEE 1999 Custom Integrated Circuits Conference, May 1999), there is some discussion of classifying IPs using properties. However, this conventional approach only applies to IP properties, and there is no mention of pin properties. Further, the goal of this conventional approach was apparently to be able to query a database for IP blocks  
15 satisfying a set of properties. In contrast, the present invention, in accordance with at least one presently preferred embodiment, contemplates the use of properties in a much broader sense to help in the automatic synthesis of SoCs. Moreover, the approach in Schindler et al., *supra*, does not provide any algorithm for searching and reasoning about the cores.

Preferably, a CIE formed in accordance with at least one embodiment of the present invention will contain a set of pre-defined properties sufficient for describing most bus-based architectures as well as unstructured architectures (not bus-based). The examples presented herebelow are based on the IBM Blue Logic™ Core Library and the CoreConnect™ bus architecture (“The CoreConnect™ Bus Architecture” IBM, 1999.)  
5 However, it should be understood that the embodiments of the present invention need not be limited to any specific bus architecture, nor to bus architectures in general.

Preferably, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention, each core and each pin are classified according to their functional, structural and electrical  
10 characteristics, while such classification is encoded in properties that can be processed by a computer program. The discussion immediately herebelow relates to classification methods while the encoding and the algorithms for automatic processing are presented further below.

Several characteristics of cores and pins can be identified that can be used for  
15 classification of the cores and pins. Fig. 1 illustrates an example of such a classification tree for cores and pins. It will be appreciated, in Fig. 1, that a tree structure is depicted and that categories progress from general to specific, starting from the left and proceeding to the right.

Preferably, properties will also be grouped according to specific purposes. For example, one can select a set of properties which encapsulate all the information required for interconnecting pins, or for generating interface logic. Fig. 2 shows an example of a pin property group called INTERFACE\_DEF that encapsulates all properties required by the CIE to determine whether two pins can be connected together.

Essentially, the specific branches and leaves of the classification trees are generic and can be organized and named in any way. Preferably, a CIE will contain algorithms which parse the property trees and groups and encode them in a manner that can be computer processed and used for reasoning.

Based on the IBM Blue Logic™ Core Library utilizing the CoreConnect™ bus architecture (discussed above) and other external cores, it has been found that most pins can be classified for interconnection purposes according to the following functional and structural properties (this is the INTERFACE\_DEF group shown in Fig. 2):

- BUS\_TYPE: the type of bus that the pin interfaces to. This can assume values such as, PLB (processor local bus), OPB (on-chip peripheral bus), ASB (AMBA system bus), APB (AMBA peripheral bus), etc.

- INTERFACE TYPE: the type of interface represented by the pin, e.g., MASTER, SLAVE.
- FUNCTION\_TYPE: the function implemented by the pin, e.g., READ, WRITE, INTERRUPT. This pin could be one of several pins responsible for implementing the function.
- OPERATION\_TYPE: the operation performed by the pin as part of the function specified in FUNCTION\_TYPE, e.g., REQUEST, ACKNOWLEDGE.
- DATA\_TYPE: the type of data manipulated by the function, e.g., ADDRESS, INSTRUCTION, DATA.
- RESOURCE\_TYPE: the system resource used when the function specified by FUNCTION\_TYPE is executed, e.g., BUS, PERIPHERAL.
- PIN\_GROUP: property used to indicate grouping of pins in the same interface.

For example, pin ICU\_plbRequest on the PowerPC<sup>TM</sup>401 is asserted by the Instruction Cache Unit (ICU) inside the PowerPC, to request an instruction fetch across the read data bus. The PowerPC acts as a master device on the processor local bus (PLB). Given this information, the following properties for the pin in question



- FUNCTION\_TYPE = \* (wild card)
- OPERATION\_TYPE = REQUEST
- DATA\_TYPE = \*
- RESOURCE\_TYPE = BUS
- 5 • PIN\_GROUP = M0, or M1, or M2, or M3 respectively

Certain properties can be further classified as “Global” or “Local”, depending on their scope. A property used for associating pins in different cores is called a Global property. A property used for associating pins in the same core is called a Local property.

For example, in the above set, property PIN\_GROUP is a Local property whereas  
 10 all others are Global. All pins in core PLB\_BUS\_4M which have PIN\_GROUP = M0 are identified as belonging to the set of pins associated with master number 0 (which is a local characteristic of those pins). Similarly, all pins in PowerPC™401 which have PIN\_GROUP = ICU are identified as belonging to the set of pins associated with the Instruction Cache Unit or ICU (which is a local characteristic of those pins). The local and  
 15 global classification will be used by the interconnection engine algorithm described in Section III.



The CIE preferably uses a specialized language for specifying properties on cores and pins. This language is called PSF, for "Property Specification Language". A PSF description is preferably associated with a core and contains the property definitions and values for all properties attached to the core and all its pins. Fig. 3 presents a fragment of  
5 a PSF description for a PowerPC 401 core showing the INTERFACE\_DEF group of properties.

The PSF language allows properties to be declared individually as well as in a set. A property set is called a Composite\_Property, which is formed by one or more individual properties. In Fig. 3, INTERFACE\_DEF is a property set, and CONNECTION\_LOGIC  
10 is an individual property.

The PSF syntax requires first that a property be declared, which involves declaring a property name and a list of values that the property can assume when associated with the core or any of its pins. After the property declarations, they are assigned values and attached to the core or its pins. In Fig. 3, for example, pin DCR\_cpuAck has composite  
15 property INTERFACE\_DEF with values {BUS\_TYPE = DCR}, {INTERFACE\_TYPE = NA /not applicable}, {OPERATION\_TYPE = ACKNOWLEDGE}, etc., and individual property CONNECTION\_LOGIC with value OR.

A property is defined as a LOCAL property by adding the 'L' after the property declaration, otherwise the property is GLOBAL. In Fig. 3, property PIN\_GROUP is a local property and all others are global.

For any given core to be usable by a CIE in accordance with at least one  
5 embodiment of the present invention, it will preferably have properties associated with  
itself and all its pins. Once that is available, that core can be used by the CIE and  
automatically connected to other cores. The IP or core provider is responsible for defining  
the properties for all its cores and pins, in accordance to the function of each pin and how  
they should be interconnected in a system. The system designer does not need to  
10 understand the details of the cores or their properties in order to be able to connect them  
using the CIE. This approach thus would appear to make the CIE one of the first  
enabling technologies for plug-and-play use and re-use of cores in any architecture.

The disclosure now turns to another aspect of the present invention, in accordance  
with at least one presently preferred embodiment, involving an interconnection engine.

15 Properties are preferably used for establishing relationships between pins of  
different cores. By comparing properties on pins, a CIE can decide whether a pin is  
compatible with another. "Compatibility" is defined for specific relationships. For  
example, two pins may be compatible from an interconnection point of view, but may be

incompatible from an electrical point of view. For example, the two pins mentioned in Section II (ICU\_plbRequest on the PowerPC and M0\_Request on the PLB Arbiter) are compatible from an interconnection point of view and can be connected together.

However, if their operating frequencies were, for example, 200MHz and 100MHz, they  
5 would not be compatible from an electrical point of view and would not be connected together.

In order to make these decisions, the CIE will preferably be able to reason about properties in a logical way, which is preferably accomplished by the two following techniques:

- 10 • Property encoding using Binary Decision Diagrams (BDDs)
- Property comparison and matching using logical operations on BDDs

In order to be able to reason about the properties automatically in a logical way via a computer program, the CIE encodes the properties as Binary Decision Diagram (BDD) variables. BDDs, as discussed in R.E. Bryant, "Graph Based Algorithms for Boolean  
15 Function Manipulation", (IEEE Transactions on Computers, Vol.35, No.8, August, 1986), are specialized data-structures for expressing and manipulating Boolean logic. An important characteristic of BDDs is that they are canonical representations. That is, given

an ordered set of Boolean variables and two different Boolean expressions (using those variables) representing the same Boolean function, the BDD graphs for both expressions will be exactly the same. For example, the BDD representations for Boolean functions  $(A \wedge B \wedge C) \vee (D \wedge E)$  and  $(E \wedge D) \vee (C \wedge A \wedge B)$  are exactly the same, which means that

5 the memory pointer in the computer memory holding the BDD node data-structure is the same in both cases.

As shown in Fig. 3, a property, when associated with a pin or a core, is preferably given a value. Each property/value pair  $PV_i = \{\text{Property } P_x = \text{Value } V_y\}$  is assigned a unique BDD variable  $b_i$ . Hence, independently of the pin or core which has the property,

10 the same property-value pair  $PV_i$  is always associated with the same BDD variable  $b_i$ . This can be easily implemented using two hash tables, with hash keys being the property name and value, and the hashed element being the BDD variable pointer.

A group of properties attached to a pin or core preferably corresponds to a group of property/value pairs. A group of property/value pairs is encoded as the Boolean AND function of all individual BDD variables for each pair in the group. This AND function is

15 also preferably a BDD. More specifically, given a group of property/value pairs  $PG = \{PV_1, PV_2, \dots, PV_n\}$ , the corresponding set of BDD variables is denoted  $B(PG) = \{b_1, b_2, \dots, b_n\}$ . The BDD for the complete group is given by:  $F(PG) = b_1 \wedge b_2 \wedge \dots \wedge b_n$ . When

the property group PG is attached to a pin T, the complete BDD function  $F(PG)$  can be denoted as  $F(T)|_{PG}$ , or the property function F of pin T with respect to property group PG.

Given the canonical qualities of BDDs, if two property groups (e.g., in two pins) contain the same property/value pairs, their BDDs will be exactly the same, even if the  
 5 orders of the property/value pairs in both groups differ. This implies that in order to check if two pins have exactly the same properties, it suffices to build the BDDs for the properties in each pin and check if the two BDDs are the same. If they are, then the properties in both pins are the same.

As an example, one may consider pins ICU\_plbRequest and M0\_Request and their  
 10 properties as previously described. The property value pairs for all their properties are shown below:

- BUS\_TYPE = PLB .....global property.....BDD Variable: A  
 .....present on both pins
- INTERFACE\_TYPE = MASTER .....global.....BDD Variable: B  
 15 .....present on both pins
- FUNCTION\_TYPE = FETCH .....global.....BDD Variable: C  
 .....present on ICU\_plbRequest only

- OPERATION\_TYPE = REQUEST .....global.....BDD Variable: D  
.....present on both pins
- DATA\_TYPE = INSTRUCTION .....global.....BDD Variable: E  
.....present on ICU\_plbRequest only
- 5 • RESOURCE\_TYPE = BUS .....global.....BDD Variable: F
- PIN\_GROUP = ICU .....local.....BDD Variable: G  
.....present on ICU\_plbRequest only
- PIN\_GROUP = M0 .....local.....BDD Variable: H  
.....present on M0\_request only

10 One can subdivide these properties into two groups of global and local properties,  
assign BDD variables for each property/value pair and compute the Boolean function

$F_{\text{global}}$  and  $F_{\text{local}}$  for each pin, are shown below:

$$F_{\text{global}} (\text{ICU\_plbRequest}) = A.B.C.D.E.F$$

$$F_{\text{local}} (\text{ICU\_plbRequest}) = G$$

15  $F_{\text{global}} (\text{M0\_Request}) = A.B.D.F$

$$F_{\text{local}}(M0\_Request) = H$$

As mentioned previously, these two pins may be connected together. However, their properties are not exactly the same, which results in their Boolean functions also not being exactly the same. This illustrates the fact that pins may be connected even though  
5 their properties do not match exactly. For this reason, the CIE preferably contains specialized algorithms which can compare the properties and decide whether two pins should be connected. These algorithms are described below.

In order to compare property/value pairs in different property groups in different pins or cores, it is desirable to be able to reason about the properties from a logical point  
10 of view, in a manner that can be processed by a computer program. Moreover, given that an SoC may have tens of cores with thousands of pins, and tens of thousands of properties, it is desirable to be able to automate this reasoning in an efficient way.

The CIE has algorithms that can reason about properties using Boolean Algebra. As described in the previous section, the properties and property groups are represented  
15 as Boolean equations (implemented as BDDs). The problems of property comparison and matching are formulated as Boolean operations on the BDDs representing the properties. There are two basic checks that the CIE needs to perform: “Compatibility check” and “Matching check”.

Using this algorithm, it can be shown that pins ICU\_plbRequest and M0\_Request are compatible with respect to the INTERFACE\_DEF property group because  $F_{\text{global}}(\text{M0\_Request}) = \text{A.B.D.F}$  contains  $F_{\text{global}}(\text{ICU\_plbRequest}) = \text{A.B.C.D.E.F}$ , hence they can be connected together. Note that when the algorithm compares pins in different cores, only the global properties are used.

15 For certain types of properties, it is important to determine if the property/value pairs in two pins are exactly the same. Thus, “Matching check” is a more strict check than “Compatibility check”, and it can be used for determining whether two pins have the



same electrical properties. For example, when comparing the operating frequencies of two pins, it is necessary to check for an exact match.

Due to the canonical properties of BDDs, two Boolean expressions representing the same Boolean function will be mapped to the same BDD. Hence, in order to check the  
5 if two property functions for two pins are the same, it is sufficient to check if their BDD representations are the same. This can be done simply by performing an equality check on the BDD pointers.

More formally, "Matching check" can be stated as follows. Let S and T be two pins in different cores and let  $F(S)|_{PG}$  and  $F(T)|_{PG}$  be the corresponding property functions  
10 for pins S and T with respect to the same property group  $PG$ . Pin S matches pin T with respect to property group  $PG$  if and only if  $F(S)|_{PG} \equiv F(T)|_{PG}$ .

The methods and algorithms described heretofore can be used for various purposes. Provided herebelow are three exemplary, non-restrictive examples of possible applications.

15 One possible application is automatic interconnection generation. The purpose of this application is to create the interconnections between two or more cores automatically

and generate the final top-level netlist description of the SoC. The flow diagram of this application is shown in Fig. 4.

Preferably, the designer initiates the process 400 by deciding upon which cores to use in the SoC (step 404). This decision is made based on the SoC specifications (402) and on the available core library (406). The output of this first step is a design skeleton which contains all the cores needed in the SoC but without any interconnections (in Fig. 4 this is called “netlist of unconnected components” 408). The CIE is invoked on this skeleton design at step 410 and it proceeds automatically in determining at that point which pins can unambiguously be connected together. The pseudocode describing this step (410) is shown below:

```
1. FOR <all components in the design> DO
2.     C = a component being visited;
3.     FOR <all pins in component C > DO
4.         T = a pin being visited;
15 5.         L = list_compatible_pins(T);
/* List of all pins in any other component (other than C) which have interconnection */
```

/\* properties compatible with pin T. This list is created by applying the compatibility \*/  
 /\* check (see Section III.B) between pin T and all other pins in other components. \*/  
 6.           connect\_compatible\_pins(T, L);  
 7. /\* create one or more nets and connect T to other compatible pins in list L if no \*/  
 5 8. /\* ambiguity exists. If a connection is ambiguous, leave it unconnected. \*/  
 9.       }  
 10. }

At the end of this step (410) , the design will contain interconnections, but it is  
 10 possible that not all pins have been connected. This may happen if a pin has two or more  
 compatible pins with exactly the same global properties. A query is thus preferably made  
 at step 412. If all pins are not interconnected, then a list of unconnected pins is preferably  
 generated at step 416 and, at step 418, the designer will preferably provide one or more  
 local property bindings.

15           As a non-restrictive example of an instance in which not all pins are connected  
 (i.e., the “No” branch from step 412), , pin ICU\_plbRequest on the PowerPC401 core is

compatible with four pins on the PLB Arbiter core, namely M0\_Request, M1\_Request, M2\_Request and M3\_Request. Similarly, all ICU related pins in the PowerPC401 are compatible with 4 pins in the PLB Arbiter (since the Arbiter can support up to 4 Masters). The CIE has a choice in deciding which Master port to use in the PLB Arbiter to connect the ICU ports. This choice can be resolved automatically by applying a default order (first M0, then M1 and so on) or by requesting the designer to provide a local property binding. By means of this binding the designer can indicate to the CIE that, for example, local property PIN\_GROUP = ICU (on ICU pins in the PowerPC401) should be bound to PIN\_GROUP = M3 (on M3 pins in the PLB Arbiter). With this extra information, the CIE can then decide that pin ICU\_plbRequest is compatible only with pin M3\_Request, and similarly for all other ICU and M3 pins in both components.

At the end of process 400, all pins in all cores should have been connected and a final fully-connected top-level netlist is generated (step 414).

Another possible application of the CIE in accordance with the present invention is automatic property verification. In this connection, the CIE can provide the designer with a flexible property verification environment. Given a design with interconnections, the designer can specify a list of properties for which exact match is required. The CIE then visits all pairs of pins which have been connected together and check that they have

matching properties (for all properties in the list). This can be used, for example, to check that connected pins have the same operating frequency (which would be a property associated with each pin).

Finally, the third example of a possible application of a CIE is that of an automated designer assistant, wherein the CIE is used as an assistant to the designer during manual design. Particularly, in some situations, the designer may want to create interconnections manually, but he/she may not know exactly which pins can be connected together. In order to find that out, the designer can select a pin in a component and ask the CIE for the list of compatible pins, and then select one or more pins from the list to connect. This list can be created by applying the compatibility check (see the discussion further above regarding property comparison and matching) between the original pin and all other pins in other components.

In practice, a CIE formed in accordance with the embodiments of the present invention has been implemented in C++ and tested using the IBM Blue Logic™ Core Library and the CoreConnect™ bus architecture. A top-level SoC design was successfully generated with multiple cores and all required interconnections automatically using the CIE. Significant reductions in design complexity and design time have been demonstrated through the usage of the CIE.

Fig. 5 illustrates a schematic block diagram of an interconnection system 500 as broadly contemplated in accordance with at least one presently preferred embodiment of the present invention. As shown, the system 500 may preferably include a selector 502, an assessing arrangement 504 and a connecting arrangement 506. Selector 502 is preferably  
5 selects at least two cores to be interconnected, wherein each core has at least one associated pin. Assessing arrangement 504 preferably assesses automatically the compatibility of at least one pin of at least one core with respect to at least one pin of at least one other core. Finally, connecting arrangement 506 preferably automatically  
10 interconnects the cores via establishing at least one connection between at least one pair of compatible pins.

In brief recapitulation, a CIE formed in accordance with the embodiments of the present invention contains several novel approaches for automatically interconnecting cores in SoCs. Among the useful innovations are: (1) a method for classifying cores and pins according to their functional, structural and electrical properties, (2) a method for  
15 encoding these properties in a manner that can be processed and reasoned about in a logical way by a computer program, (3) a method for analyzing and comparing properties using Boolean algebra and Binary Decision Diagrams, and (4) a method for automatically determining the correct interconnections between pins from different cores in an SoC. It should also be appreciated that a CIE formed in accordance with the embodiments of the

present invention can represent one of the first approaches that can effectively realize the promise of plug-and-play of cores (IPs).

In further recapitulation, at least one embodiment of the present invention may preferably include a classifying arrangement which classifies cores and pins in terms of predetermined properties. An encoding arrangement preferably encodes such properties as binary decision diagram variables. An assessing arrangement in accordance with the present invention is preferably adapted to perform Boolean operations on said binary decision diagram variables to compare and match properties. Further, the assessing arrangement is preferably adapted to perform a compatibility check to determine whether the pins of a given pair of pins are compatible with respect to at least one given property and to perform a matching check to determine whether the pins of a given pair of pins exhibit equivalent values associated with at least one given property. A connecting arrangement preferably interconnects the cores via establishing at least one connection between at least one pair of compatible pins. A verifying arrangement is preferably provided that verifies, subsequent to interconnecting, whether the pins in at least one interconnected pair of pins have matching pin properties. Further, the verifying arrangement is preferably adapted to refer to a predetermined list of pin properties to determine whether the pins in at least one interconnected pair of pins have matching pin properties.

It is to be understood that the present invention, in accordance with at least one presently preferred embodiment, includes a selector which selects at least two cores to be interconnected, an assessing arrangement which automatically assesses the compatibility of at least one pin of at least one core with respect to at least one pin of at least one other  
5 core, and a connecting arrangement which automatically interconnects the cores via establishing at least one connection between at least one pair of compatible pins. Together, the selector, assessing arrangement and connecting arrangement may be implemented on at least one general-purpose computer running suitable software programs. These may also be implemented on at least one Integrated Circuit or part of at  
10 least one Integrated Circuit. Thus, it is to be understood that the invention may be implemented in hardware, software, or a combination of both.

If not otherwise stated herein , it is to be assumed that all patents, patent applications, patent publications and other publications mentioned and cited herein are hereby fully incorporated by reference herein as if set forth in their entirety herein.

15 Although illustrative embodiments of the present invention have been described herein with reference to the accompanying drawings, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited to those precise embodiments, and that various other changes and



modifications may be affected therein by one skilled in the art without departing from the scope or spirit of the invention.

## **Claims**

What is claimed is:

1. A method of interconnecting cores in systems-on-chip, said method comprising the steps of:

5        selecting at least two cores to be interconnected, each core having at least one associated pin;

              automatically assessing the compatibility of at least one pin of at least one core with respect to at least one pin of at least one other core; and

              automatically interconnecting said cores via establishing at least one connection  
10        between at least one pair of compatible pins.

2. The method according to Claim 1, further comprising:

              automatically assessing, subsequent to said interconnecting step, whether all pins are connected;

              if at least two pins are not connected, thereafter applying a protocol to establish at  
15        least one additional connection between at least one additional pair of compatible pins.

3. The method according to Claim 1, further comprising, prior to said selecting step, classifying said cores and said pins in terms of predetermined properties.

4. The method according to Claim 3, further comprising, prior to said selecting step, encoding said properties as binary decision diagram variables.

5 5. The method according to Claim 4, wherein said assessing step comprises performing Boolean operations on said binary decision diagram variables to compare and match properties.

6. The method according to Claim 3, wherein said assessing step comprises performing a compatibility check to determine whether the pins of a given pair of pins are  
10 compatible with respect to at least one given property.

7. The method according to Claim 6, wherein said assessing step further comprises performing a matching check to determine whether the pins of a given pair of pins exhibit equivalent values associated with at least one given property.

8. The method according to Claim 1, further comprising:  
15 subsequent to said interconnecting step, automatically verifying whether the pins in at least one interconnected pair of pins have matching pin properties.

9. The method according to Claim 8, further comprising:

prior to said verifying step, establishing a list of pin properties for which a match between the pins in at least one pair of pins is required;

said verifying step comprising the step of referring to said list of pin properties to  
5 determine whether the pins in at least one interconnected pair of pins have matching pin properties.

10. A system for interconnecting cores in systems-on-chip, said system comprising:

a selector which selects at least two cores to be interconnected, each core having  
10 at least one associated pin;

an assessing arrangement which automatically assesses the compatibility of at least one pin of at least one core with respect to at least one pin of at least one other core; and

a connecting arrangement which automatically interconnects said cores via establishing at least one connection between at least one pair of compatible pins.

15 11. The system according to Claim 10, further comprising a classifying arrangement which classifies said cores and said pins in terms of predetermined properties.

12. The system according to Claim 11, further comprising an encoding arrangement which encodes said properties as binary decision diagram variables.

13. The system according to Claim 12, wherein said assessing arrangement is adapted to perform Boolean operations on said binary decision diagram variables to  
5 compare and match properties.

14. The system according to Claim 11, wherein said assessing arrangement is adapted to perform a compatibility check to determine whether the pins of a given pair of pins are compatible with respect to at least one given property.

15. The system according to Claim 14, wherein said assessing arrangement is  
10 further adapted to perform a matching check to determine whether the pins of a given pair of pins exhibit equivalent values associated with at least one given property.

16. The system according to Claim 10, further comprising a verifying arrangement which verifies, subsequent to interconnecting, whether the pins in at least one interconnected pair of pins have matching pin properties.

15 17. The system according to Claim 16, wherein said verifying arrangement is adapted to refer to a predetermined list of pin properties to determine whether the pins in at least one interconnected pair of pins have matching pin properties.

18. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for interconnecting cores in systems-on-chip, said method comprising:

5 selecting at least two cores to be interconnected, each core having at least one associated pin;

automatically assessing the compatibility of at least one pin of at least one core with respect to at least one pin of at least one other core; and

automatically interconnecting said cores via establishing at least one connection between at least one pair of compatible pins.

10

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	z	P	95% CI
Intercept	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Age	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Gender	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Education	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Health	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Marriage	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Children	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Work	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Religion	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Politics	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Art	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Science	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
History	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Geography	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Language	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Music	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Dance	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Theater	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Cinema	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
TV	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Radio	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Internet	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Mobile	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Smartphone	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Tablet	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Wearable	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
IoT	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Cloud	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Blockchain	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
AI	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
ML	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
DL	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
CV	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
NLP	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Robotics	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Autonomous	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Space	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Biotech	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
CRISPR	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Genomics	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Protein	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Cell	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Organ	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
System	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Network	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Security	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Cyber	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Crime	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Law	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Justice	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Human	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Society	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Culture	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Tradition	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Religion	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Philosophy	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Psychology	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Behavior	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Emotion	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Thought	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Consciousness	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00
Mind	0.00	0.00	0.00		

A method and algorithms for creating correct-by-construction interconnections among complex intellectual property (IP) cores with hundreds of pins. The methods contemplated herein significantly reduce the time, complexity and potential for errors associated with systems-on-chip (SoC) integration.

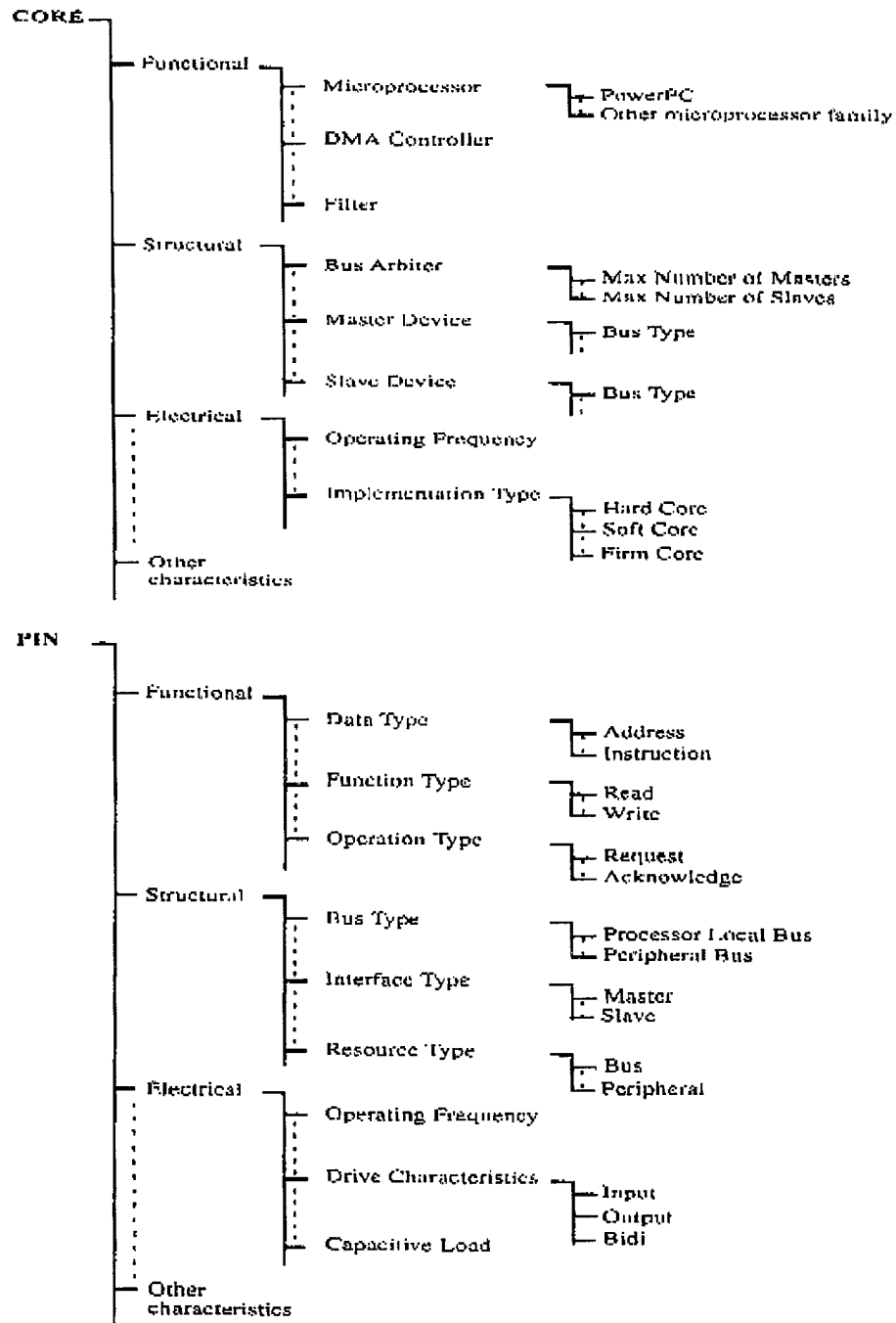


FIG. 1



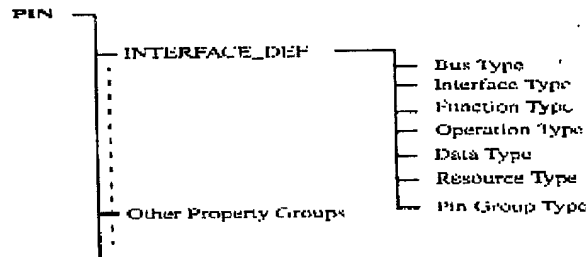


Fig. 2

```

COMPONENT PowerPC401 PROPERTIES {
  COMPOSITE_PROPERTY INTERFACE_DEF {
    PROPERTY BUS_TYPE : { PLB, OCM, DCR, etc. };

    PROPERTY INTERFACE_TYPE : { MASTER, ISOCM, DSOCM, SYSTEM, EIC, LSSD, FIAG, ... };
    PROPERTY FUNCTION_TYPE : { READ_OR_WRITE, READ, WRITE, INTERRUPT, FETCH, ... };
    PROPERTY OPERATION_TYPE : { ACKNOWLEDGE, BUSY, ERROR, VALID, ABORT, ENABLE,
                                GUARDED_TRANSFER, COMPRESSED_TRANSFER, REQUEST, SIZE,
                                BYTE_ENABLE, ADJUST, HOLD, ... };

    PROPERTY DATA_TYPE : { ADDRESS, DATA, PRIORITY_DATA, INSTRUCTION, ... };
    PROPERTY RESOURCE_TYPE : { BUS, WRITE_BUS, READ_BUS, ... };
    PROPERTY PIN_GROUP/L : { DCU, ICU, IN, OUT, CONTROL, ... };
  };

  PROPERTY CONNECTION_LOGIC : { CONCAT, OR, AND, XOR, NOT };

  pin ICU_plbRequest {
    INTERFACE_DEF = { PLB, MASTER, FETCH, REQUEST, INSTRUCTION, BUS, ICU };
  };
  pin PLB_dcuAddrAck {
    INTERFACE_DEF = { PLB, MASTER, READ_OR_WRITE, ACKNOWLEDGE, ADDRESS, BUS, DCU };
  };
  pin PLB_icuRdDBus {
    INTERFACE_DEF = { PLB, MASTER, READ, NA, DATA, BUS, ICU };
  };
  pin DCR_cpuAck {
    INTERFACE_DEF = { DCR, NA, READ_OR_WRITE, ACKNOWLEDGE, DATA, NA, CONTROL };
    CONNECTION_LOGIC = { OR };
  };
  .....
  .....
}
  
```

Fig. 3

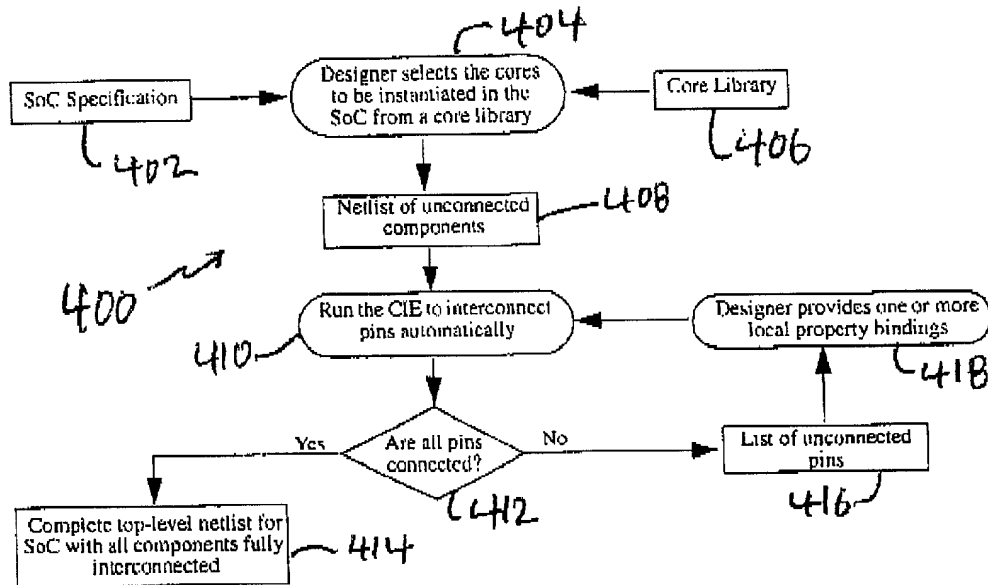


FIG. 4



# DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name;

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

METHODS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR AUTOMATICALLY INTERCONNECTING CORES IN SYSTEMS-ON-CHIP

the specification of which (check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ is attached hereto.

☒ was filed on April 3, 2000 as International Business Machines Docket No. YOR9-2000-0054

and was amended on \_\_\_\_\_ (if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the patentability of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119(a)-(d) or §365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or §365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or PCT International application, having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s)			Priority Claimed	
(Number)	(Country)	(Day/Month/Year Filed)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. §119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

_____ (Application Number)	_____ (Filing Date)
_____ (Application Number)	_____ (Filing Date)

DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR PATENT APPLICATION

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. §120 of any United States Application(s), or §365(c) of any PCT International application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States, or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information material to the patentability of this application as defined in 37 CFR §1.56 which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Application Serial No.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Filing Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Status) (patented, pending, abandoned)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Application Serial No.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Filing Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Status) (patented, pending, abandoned)

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

**POWER OF ATTORNEY:** As a named inventor I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith (list name and registration number).

Manny W. Schechter (Reg. 31,722), Terry J. Ilardi (Reg. 29,936), Christopher A. Hughes (Reg. 26,914), Edward A. Pennington (Reg. 32,588), John E. Hoel (Reg. 26,279), Joseph C. Redmond, Jr. (Reg. 18,753), Paul J. Otterstedt (Reg. 37,411), Douglas W. Cameron (Reg. 31,596), Wayne L. Ellenbogen (Reg. No. 43,602), Stephen C. Kaufman (Reg. 29,551), Daniel P. Morris (Reg. 32,053), Louis J. Percello (Reg. 33,206), Jay P. Sbrollini (Reg. 36,266), Robert M. Trepp (Reg. 25,933), David M. Shofi (Reg. 39,835, and Louis P. Herzberg (Reg. 41,500)

Send Correspondence to: FERENCE & ASSOCIATES, 129 Oakhurst Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15215

Direct Telephone Calls to: (name and telephone number) Stanley D. Ference III, (412) 781-7386

Reinaldo A. Bergamashi

Full name of sole or first inventor

Inventor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

9A Windle Park, Tarrytown, NY 10591

Residence

BRAZIL

Citizenship

Same as above

Post Office Address

DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR PATENT APPLICATION

Subhrajit Bhattacharya

Full name of second joint-inventor, if any

Inventor's Signature

Date

25 Rockledge Avenue, Apt. 407, White Plains, NY 10601

Residence

INDIA

Citizenship

Same as above

Post Office Address